



Climate change and family planning: Least-developed countries define the agenda

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Abstract:

The links between rapid population growth and concerns regarding climate change have received little attention. Some commentators have argued that slowing population growth is necessary to reduce further rises in carbon emissions. Others have objected that this would give rise to dehumanizing 'population control' programmes in developing countries. Yet the perspective of the developing countries that will be worst affected by climate change has been almost completely ignored by the scientific literature. This deficit is addressed by this paper, which analyses the first 40 National Adaptation Programmes of Action reports submitted by governments of least-developed countries to the Global Environment Facility for funding. Of these documents, 93% identified at least one of three ways in which demographic trends interact with the effects of climate change: (i) faster degradation of the sources of natural resources; (ii) increased demand for scarce resources; and (iii) heightened human vulnerability to extreme weather events. These findings suggest that voluntary access to family planning services should be made more available to poor communities in least-developed countries. We stress the distinction between this approach, which prioritizes the welfare of poor communities affected by climate change, and the argument that population growth should be slowed to limit increases in global carbon emissions. The paper concludes by calling for increased support for rights-based family planning services, including those integrated with HIV/AIDS services, as an important complementary measure to climate change adaptation programmes in developing countries.

Source: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2770281>

Resource Description

Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Extreme Weather Event, Unspecified Exposure

Geographic Feature:

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

Geographic Location:

resource focuses on specific location

Global or Unspecified

Health Co-Benefit/Co-Harm (Family Planning/Population Reduction):

specification of beneficial or harmful impacts to health resulting from efforts to promote family planning or reduce population growth as a climate change adaptation or mitigation measure

A focus of content

Health Impact:

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Developmental Effect

Developmental Effect: Reproductive

Mitigation/Adaptation:

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation, Mitigation

Population of Concern: A focus of content

Population of Concern:

populations at particular risk or vulnerability to climate change impacts

Low Socioeconomic Status

Resource Type:

format or standard characteristic of resource

Policy/Opinion, Review

Timescale:

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified